



## Diabetes and Tobacco Use Fact Sheet

The single most important thing that you can do for your health and the health of others is to quit using tobacco.

**People who have diabetes and smoke are at increased risk of complications associated with diabetes. Complications may include:**

- **Vascular disease** — Smoking damages blood vessels throughout the body. People with diabetes who smoke are 11 times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke than people who don't have diabetes and don't smoke. Smoking causes an increased risk for wound infection and slow-healing sores from peripheral vascular disease which could lead to amputations.
- **Neuropathy** (peripheral and autonomic) — Smoking increases the risk of nerve damage especially for people with diabetes. This can result in impotence in men, digestive problems, and injury to feet.
- **Nephropathy** — Smoking triples the risk of kidney disease in people with diabetes.
- **Retinopathy** — Smoking can increase the risk of blindness in people with diabetes.
- **Periodontal disease** — Smoking increases the chance of tooth loss especially for people with diabetes.

Smokers are 3 times more likely to develop Type 2 Diabetes.

Smokeless tobacco users have a higher incidence of diabetes and smokeless tobacco has been associated with insulin resistance in people with diabetes.

Smokers also have a harder time controlling their blood glucose levels because insulin resistance is increased by smoking.

Women who smoke have poor birth outcomes including the baby being born too soon, reduced fetal growth, stillbirths and/or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

The benefits of quitting are dramatic. Better blood glucose means lower A1C over time. Better circulation, less resistance to insulin, decreases the risk of diabetic complications, lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol levels all of which help with better diabetes management. Studies have shown that the health benefits for people with diabetes who stop smoking begin immediately. These benefits continue to increase with the length of time a person remains tobacco-free.

If you have diabetes, one of the most important things you can do to manage your diabetes is to quit using tobacco. If you would like to quit in the next 30 days call Quit Now Kentucky at 1-800-Quit Now (1-800-784-8669) or to find out more information about quitting log on to [www.QuitNowKentucky.org](http://www.QuitNowKentucky.org). For more information about managing your diabetes, talk with your health care professional or diabetes educator.